

CLAIMS

1. Method comprising the steps of communicating between an internet protocol (IP) device over an IP network and a bridge connected to non-IP equipment providing telephony connections as well as telephony-related features, which equipment is connected to a public switched telephone network (PSTN), by signaling from said IP device to said bridge with an access code indicative of a feature of said equipment and by converting said access code to a non-IP protocol for accessing said feature of said non-IP equipment by said IP device.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein preceding said signaling with an access code, a remote hookflash is signaled from said IP device to said bridge.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said remote hookflash is signaled from a non-IP device connected to said IP device.

4. Method for accessing a feature of equipment connected to a public switched telephone network with an access signal code corresponding to said feature, comprising the steps of:

initiating said access code signal from a terminal (22, 24, 26) remote from said equipment,

transmitting said access code signal as a packetized signal over an internet protocol (IP) network to a relay device (10), and

converting said packetized access code signal at said relay device to a non-IP access code signal for said accessing said feature.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of signaling from said terminal to said relay device with a packetized hookflash signal before said steps of initiating and transmitting said access code signal and converting said packetized hookflash signal at said relay device to a non-IP hookflash signal for signaling said equipment before accessing said feature with said access code signal.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said hookflash signal and said access code are signaled from an IP device (20) connected to said terminal (22, 24) intermediate the IP network and the terminal.

7. Telecommunications system having equipment providing telephony connections as well as telephony-related features accessible to a plurality of telephones connected as extensions thereof, said equipment for connection to a public switched telephone network (PSTN), said system further comprising an internet protocol (IP) relay device (10) connected as at least one extension of said equipment for converting at least voice and signaling between said PSTN and one or more IP devices (18, 20, 26) in communication with said IP relay device over an IP network, said one or more IP devices for providing a remote access signal to said IP relay device over said IP network for accessing said of features said equipment as said at least one extension.

8. The telecommunications system of claim 7, wherein said remote access signal is a remote hookflash signal that is relayed from said IP relay device to said equipment.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein said remote hookflash signal is initiated at a terminal connected to one of said IP devices.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein said accessing said equipment is for accessing a feature of said equipment by said terminal.

11. The telecommunications system of claim 7, wherein said accessing said equipment is for accessing a feature of said equipment.

12. The telecommunications system of claim 3, wherein said accessing said equipment is for accessing POTS terminal (30) of said PSTN.

13. The telecommunications system of claim 12, wherein said accessing said equipment is for accessing a POTS telephone (30) over said PSTN network from a terminal connected to one of said IP devices.

14. A gateway, comprising:
means responsive to a remote hookflash signal from a remote device over an internet protocol (IP) network for providing said hookflash signal in a non-IP format to equipment connected to a public switched telephone network (PSTN) for providing telephony connections as well as telephony-related features to telephones connected to said equipment; and
means responsive, subsequent to said hookflash signal, to an access code from said remote device over said IP network for providing said access code to said equipment in a non-IP format indicative of a feature provided by said equipment to extensions thereof whereby said gateway enables said remote device to gain access to said feature remotely over said IP network.